

What is Claimed is:

1. An interactive television program guide system in which an interactive television program guide is at least partially implemented on user equipment of a user, comprising:

means for displaying a list of programming themes;

means for providing an option with the interactive television program guide for the user to select a programming theme from the list of programming themes and a level of interest in that programming theme which is indicative of the user's programming interests; and

means for modifying the list of programming themes based upon the selected theme and level of interest.

2. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 1, wherein the means for providing the option for the user to select a programming theme and a level of interest in that programming theme comprises providing an option for the user to designate a high level of interest in the selected programming theme.

3. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 2, wherein the means for modifying the list of programming themes comprises means for displaying the list of programming themes with the selected programming theme at the top of the list.

4. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 3, wherein the means for displaying the list of programming themes further comprises means for shifting the remaining programming themes to a lower position on the list.

5. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 1, further comprising:

means for providing an option to select a programming theme from the list as a search criterion for searching program listings data.

6. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 5, further comprising:

means for searching the program listings data for programming satisfying the search criterion in a database maintained by the interactive television program guide.

7. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 6, wherein the interactive television program guide maintains the database on the user equipment.

8. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 6, further comprising:

a server located at a television distribution facility on which at least a portion of the interactive television program guide is implemented, wherein the interactive television program guide maintains the database on the server.

9. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 6, further comprising:

means for displaying a list of programming satisfying the search criterion.

10. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 1, wherein the means for providing the option for the user to select a programming theme and a level of interest in that programming theme comprises providing an option to designate a low level of interest in the selected programming theme.

11. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 10, wherein the means for modifying the list of programming themes comprises means for displaying the list of programming themes with the selected programming theme at the bottom of the list.

12. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 10, wherein the means for modifying the list of programming themes comprises means for deleting the selected programming theme from the list of programming themes.

13. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 1, wherein the means for providing an option for the user to select a programming theme and a level of interest in that programming theme comprises means for numerically

designating a position for the selected programming theme in the list of programming themes.

14. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 1, wherein the means for modifying the list of programming themes comprises means for displaying the selected programming theme in a predetermined color.

15. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 14, further comprising:

means for searching program listings data stored in a database maintained by the interactive television program guide while using the selected programming theme as a search criterion.

16. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 15, wherein the interactive television program guide maintains the database on the user equipment.

17. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 15, further comprising:

a server located at a television distribution facility on which at least a portion of the interactive television program guide is implemented, wherein the interactive television program guide maintains the database on the server.

18. The interactive television program guide defined in claim 15, further comprising:

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means for displaying a list of programming satisfying the search criterion.

19. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 1, further comprising:

means for storing the selected programming theme and level of interest.

20. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 1, wherein the user equipment is user personal computer equipment.

21. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 1, wherein the user equipment is user television equipment.

22. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 1, further comprising:

a server located at a television distribution facility on which at least a portion of the interactive television program guide is implemented.

23. An interactive television program guide system in which an interactive television program guide is implemented on user equipment of a user, comprising:

means for providing an option with the interactive television program guide for the user to select a favorite programming theme from a list of programming themes; and

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means for displaying the list of programming themes in which the favorite programming theme is reordered at the top of the list.

24. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 23, wherein the means for displaying the list of programming themes further comprises means for shifting the remaining programming themes in the list to a lower position on the list.

25. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 23, further comprising:

means for providing an option to select a programming theme from the list as a search criterion; and

means for searching programming listings data for programming satisfying the search criterion.

26. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 25, further comprising:

means for displaying a list of programming satisfying the search criterion.

27. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 23, further comprising:

means for storing the favorite programming theme in a non-volatile memory device.

28. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 23, wherein the user equipment is personal computer equipment.

29. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 23, wherein the user equipment is user television equipment.

30. An interactive television program guide system in which an interactive television program guide is implemented on user equipment of a user, comprising:

means for providing an option with the interactive television program guide for the user to select a programming theme for which the user has a low level of interest from a list of programming themes; and

means for providing an option for displaying the list of programming themes having the selected programming theme at the bottom of the list of programming themes.

31. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 30, further comprising:

means for providing an option for deleting the selected programming theme from the list of programming themes.

32. The interactive program guide system defined in claim 31, further comprising:

means for providing an option for restoring the deleted programming theme to the themes list.

33. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 30, further comprising:

means for storing the selected programming theme in a non-volatile memory device.

34. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 30, wherein the user equipment is personal computer equipment.

35. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 30, wherein the user equipment is user television equipment.

36. An interactive television program guide system in which an interactive television program guide is implemented on user equipment of a user, comprising:

means for displaying a list of programming themes;

means for providing an option with the interactive television program guide for the user to select a plurality of favorite programming themes from the list of programming themes; and

means for displaying the list of programming themes in which the selected favorite programming themes are distinctively displayed.

37. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 36, wherein the means for displaying the list of programming themes comprises highlighting the favorite programming theme in a predetermined color.

38. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 36, further comprising:

means for searching programming listings data for programming having at least one of the selected programming themes.

39. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 37, further comprising:

means for displaying a list of programming having at least one of the selected programming themes.

40. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 36, further comprising:

means for storing the favorite programming themes in a non-volatile memory device.

41. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 36, wherein the user equipment is personal computer equipment.

42. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 36, wherein the user equipment is user television equipment.

43. An interactive television program guide system in which an interactive program guide is at least partially implemented on user equipment of a user, comprising:

means for displaying a list of programming themes;

means for providing an option with the interactive television program guide for the user to select a programming theme from the list of programming

themes and a level of interest in that programming theme which is indicative of the user's programming interest; and

means for providing an option for creating a preference profile with which the selected programming theme and level of interest are associated.

44. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 43, wherein there are multiple profiles, the system further comprising means for providing an option of selecting which of the profiles to make active.

45. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 43, further comprising:

means for modifying the list of programming themes based upon the selected programming theme and level of interest.

46. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 43, wherein the means for providing an option for the user to select a programming theme and a level of interest in that programming theme comprises providing an option for the user to designate a high level of interest in the selected programming theme.

47. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 44, wherein the means for modifying the list of programming themes comprises means for displaying the list of programming themes

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with the selected programming theme at the top of the list.

48. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 45, wherein the means for displaying the list of programming themes further comprises means for shifting the remaining programming themes to a lower position on the list.

49. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 43, further comprising:

means for providing an option to select a programming theme from the list as a search criterion for searching program listings data.

50. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 47, further comprising:

means for searching the program listings data for programming satisfying the search criterion in a database maintained by the interactive television program guide.

51. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 48, wherein the interactive television program guide maintains the database on the user equipment.

52. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 48, further comprising:

a server located at a television distribution facility on which at least a portion of the interactive television program guide is

implemented, wherein the interactive television program guide maintains the database on the server.

53. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 48, further comprising:

means for displaying a list of programming satisfying the search criterion.

54. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 43, wherein the means for providing an option for the user to select a programming theme and a level of interest in that programming theme comprises providing an option to designate a low level of interest in the selected programming theme.

55. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 52, wherein the means for modifying the list of programming themes comprises displaying the list of programming themes with the selected programming theme at the bottom of the list.

56. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 52, wherein the means for modifying the list of programming themes comprises means for deleting the selected programming theme from the list of programming themes.

57. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 43, wherein the means for providing an option for the user to select a programming theme and a level of interest in that

programming theme comprises means for numerically designating a position for the selected programming theme in the list of programming themes.

58. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 43, wherein the means for modifying the list of programming themes comprises means for displaying the selected programming theme in a predetermined color.

59. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 56, further comprising:

means for searching program listings data stored in a database maintained by the interactive television program guide while using the selected programming theme as a search criterion.

60. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 57, wherein the interactive television program guide maintains the database on the user equipment.

61. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 57, further comprising:

a server located at a television distribution facility on which at least a portion of the interactive television program guide is implemented, wherein the interactive television program guide maintains the database on the server.

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62. The interactive television program guide defined in claim 57, further comprising:

means for displaying a list of programming satisfying the search criterion.

63. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 43, further comprising:

means for storing the selected programming theme and level of interest.

64. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 43, wherein the user equipment is user personal computer equipment.

65. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 43, wherein the user equipment is user television equipment.

66. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 43, further comprising:

a server located at a television distribution facility on which at least a portion of the interactive television program guide is implemented.

67. An interactive television program guide system in which an interactive television program guide is at least partially implemented on user equipment of a user, comprising:

means for displaying a first list of programming themes;

means for providing an option with the interactive television program guide for the user to select a programming theme from the list of programming themes and a level of interest in that programming theme which is indicative of the user's programming interests; and

means for displaying a second list of programming themes based upon the selected programming theme and level of interest.

68. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 67, wherein the second list of programming themes displays only the selected programming themes.

69. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 67, wherein the means for providing an option for the user to select a programming theme and a level of interest in that programming theme comprises means for providing an option for the user to designate a high level of interest in the selected programming theme.

70. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 67, further comprising:

means for providing an option to select a programming theme from the second list as a search criterion for searching program listings data.

71. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 70, further comprising:

means for searching the program listings data for programming satisfying the search criterion in a database maintained by the interactive television program guide.

72. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 71, wherein the interactive television program guide maintains the database on the user equipment.

73. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 71, further comprising:

a server located at a television distribution facility on which at least a portion of the interactive television program guide is implemented, wherein the interactive television program guide maintains the database on the server.

74. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 71, further comprising:

means for displaying a list of programming satisfying the search criterion.

75. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 67, further comprising:

means for storing the selected programming theme and level of interest.

76. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 67, wherein the user equipment is user personal computer equipment.

77. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 67, wherein the user equipment is user television equipment.

78. A method for using an interactive television program guide system in which an interactive television program guide is at least partially implemented on user equipment of a user, comprising:

displaying a list of programming themes;
providing an option with the interactive program guide system for the user to select a programming theme from the list of programming themes and a level of interest in that programming theme which is indicative of the user's programming interests; and
modifying the list of programming themes based on the selected programming theme and level of interest.

79. The method defined in claim 78 wherein the step of providing an option for the user to select a programming theme from the list of programming themes and a level of interest in that programming theme comprises designating a high level of interest in the selected programming theme.

80. The method defined in claim 79 wherein the step of modifying the list of programming themes comprises reordering the favorite programming theme at the top of the list of programming themes.

81. The method defined in claim 80 wherein the step of modifying the list of programming themes

further comprises shifting the remaining programming themes to a lower position on the list.

82. The method defined in claim 79, further comprising:

providing an option to select a programming theme from the list as a search criterion for searching program listings data.

83. The method defined in claim 82, further comprising:

searching the program listings data for programming satisfying the search criterion in a database maintained by the interactive television program guide.

84. The method defined in claim 83, further comprising:

maintaining the database on user equipment.

85. The method defined in claim 83, further comprising:

providing a server located at a television distribution facility on which at least a portion of the interactive television program guide is implemented; and

maintaining the database on the server.

86. The method defined in claim 83, further comprising:

displaying a list of programming satisfying the search criterion.

87. The method defined in claim 78, wherein the step of providing an option for the user to select a programming theme and a level of interest in that programming theme comprises providing an option to designate a low level of interest in the selected programming theme.

88. The method defined in claim 87, wherein the step of modifying the list of programming themes comprises displaying the list of programming themes with the selected programming theme at the bottom of the list.

89. The method defined in claim 87, wherein the step of modifying the list of programming themes comprises deleting the selected programming theme from the list of programming themes.

90. The method defined in claim 78, wherein the means for providing an option for the user to select a programming theme and a level of interest in that programming theme comprises numerically designating the position of the selected programming theme in the list of programming themes.

91. The method defined in claim 78, wherein the means for modifying the list of programming themes

comprises means for displaying the selected programming theme in a predetermined color.

92. The method defined in claim 91, further comprising:

searching program listings data stored in a database maintained by the interactive television program guide while using the selected programming theme as a search criterion.

93. The method defined in claim 92, further comprising:

maintaining the database on the user equipment.

94. The method defined in claim 92, further comprising:

providing a server located at a television distribution facility on which at least a portion of the interactive television program guide is implemented; and

maintaining the database on the server.

95. The method defined in claim 92, further comprising:

displaying a list of programming satisfying the search criterion.

96. The method defined in claim 78, further comprising:

storing the selected programming theme and level of interest.

97. The method defined in claim 78, further comprising:

providing a server located at a television distribution facility; and

implementing at least a portion of the interactive television program guide on the server.

98. The method defined in claim 78, wherein the step of providing an option for the user to select a programming theme from the list of programming themes and a level of interest in that programming theme comprises designating a plurality of favorite programming themes from the list of programming themes.

99. The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 98, wherein the step of modifying the list of programming themes comprises highlighting the favorite programming theme in a predetermined color.

100. The method defined in claim 98, further comprising:

searching programming listings data for programming having at least one of the selected programming themes.

101. The method defined in claim 100, further comprising:

displaying a list of programming having at least one of the selected programming themes.

102. The method defined in claim 78, further comprising:

providing an option for creating a preference profile with which the selected programming theme and the respective level of interest are associated.

103. The method defined in claim 102, wherein there are multiple profiles, the method further comprising:

providing an option of selecting which of the profiles to make active.

104. A method for using an interactive television program guide system in which an interactive television program guide is at least partially implemented on user equipment of a user, comprising:

displaying a first list of programming themes;

providing an option with the interactive television program guide for the user to select a programming theme from the list of programming themes and a level of interest in that programming theme which is indicative of the user's programming interests; and

displaying a second list of programming themes based upon the selected programming theme and level of interest.

105. The method defined in claim 104, wherein the step of displaying a second list of programming themes comprises displaying only the selected programming themes.

106. The method defined in claim 104, wherein the means for providing an option for the user to select a programming theme and a level of interest in that programming theme comprises providing an option for the user to designate a high level of interest in the selected programming theme.

107. The method defined in claim 104, further comprising:

providing an option to select a programming theme from the second list as a search criterion for searching program listings data.

108. The method defined in claim 107, further comprising:

searching the program listings data for programming satisfying the search criterion in a database maintained by the interactive television program guide.

109. The method defined in claim 108, further comprising:

maintaining the database on the user equipment.

110. The method defined in claim 108, further comprising:

a server located at a television distribution facility on which at least a portion of the interactive television program guide is implemented, wherein the interactive television program guide maintains the database on the server.

111. The method defined in claim 108, further comprising:

displaying a list of programming satisfying the search criterion.

112. The method defined in claim 104, further comprising:

storing the selected programming theme and level of interest.

113. The method defined in claim 104 further comprising:

providing a server located at a television distribution facility; and

implementing at least a portion of the interactive television program guide on the server.

PCT/US2003/036325